

REMARKS

Claims 1-4, 6-10, 12-16 and 18 are pending in this application. In the Office Action, the Examiner issued a final rejection of all of these claims under 35 U.S.C. §103 as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent 5,960,337 (Brewster, et al.) in view of U.S. Patent 6,028,514 (Lemelson, et al.).

Applicants herein ask that independent Claims 1, 7 and 13 be amended to better define the subject matters of these claims.

For the reasons discussed below, Claims 1-4, 6-10, 12-16 and 18 patentably distinguish over the prior art and are allowable. The Examiner is, thus, respectfully requested to enter this Amendment, to reconsider and to withdraw the rejection of Claims 1-4, 6-10, 12-16 and 18 under 35 U.S.C. §103, and to allow these claims.

The present invention, generally, relates to methods and systems for providing help to people with disabilities. Generally, this is done through the use of a network of people with disabilities and of people who have volunteered to help. More specifically, a first database is established with information about the people with disabilities, and a second database is established with information about the volunteers. When a disabled person makes a request for help, a matching server uses information from the established databases to match the person making the request with a volunteer who may be able to help. In particular, this matching server obtains information from the first database about the disabled person making the request, and uses that obtained information from the first database to identify a person in the second database who may be able to help.

As discussed in Applicants' previous Amendment, there is an important difference between this invention and the procedures described in Brewster, et al. and Lemelson. This

difference is that both Brewster, et al. and Lemelson are specifically designed primarily to handle emergency situations, while the present invention is not.

To elaborate, Brewster, et al. describes a method and system for providing help in an emergency situations. With the procedure disclosed in Brewster, et al, after an operator is informed of an emergency event, the operator selects from a group of Emergency Assistance Services (EAS), the EAS who can reach the location of the emergency in the quickest time, and the operator then notifies that selected EAS.

Lemelson describes a method and system for warning people of a variety of types of emergencies or dangerous conditions in their vicinity. In this procedure, a warning device is carried by the person who is to be warned, and this warning device can also be used to monitor for several medical conditions of the wearer.

The above-described general difference between this invention and the procedures described in Brewster, et al. and Lemelson is reflected in several more specific differences between this invention and these prior art systems. One important difference is that this invention uses pre-established databases of volunteers and of disabled persons, while neither Brewster, et al. nor Lemelson matches data from such a pair of pre-established databases. Another important difference is the way in which the present invention uses the data in the two databases – that is, data obtained from a first database is used to obtain data from the second database in order to match a volunteer with a person needing assistance.

In the Office Action, the Examiner argued that Brewster, et al. discloses a database having information about people/volunteers, but noted that this reference does not disclose a database with information about people who need help. The Examiner then cited Lemelson as disclosing a database with information about people who need help, and the Examiner argued

that it would have been obvious to use the database of Lemelson with the database of Brewster, et al.

However, even if the system of Brewster is provided with the database of Lemelson, that still would not result in the present invention. This is because that modified system would not use the databases together in the manner in which they are used in the present invention.

This use of the two databases together is of substantial utility because it results in a better match of volunteers with those who need assistance.

Moreover, it cannot be said that it would have been obvious from the prior art to use the databases together in the above-described manner. This is because neither Brewster, et al. nor Lemelson show a system having the two databases. For one of ordinary skill in the art to make the invention, that person would, first, have to modify the Brewster, et al. system to include a second database, and then modify this modification to use the databases together as is done in the present invention. Because the two databases do not exist together in the prior art, it would not have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to make that modification to the modification – that is, to use the two databases together as is done in the present invention. There is no suggestion, teaching or guidance in the prior art to make that second modification. The only teaching or guidance to do this is found in the present application itself.

Applicants herein ask that independent Claims 1, 7 and 13 be amended to describe more expressly the way the two databases are used together. In particular, as amended herein, Claims 1 and 13 describe the feature that, in response to receiving a request for help from a person having a disability, the matching server obtains information about that person from the first database and uses that information obtained from the first database to identify in the second

database a volunteer who is willing to assist a person having that disability. Claim 7, which is directed to a system for providing help to people, also describes this matching server.

The other references of record have been reviewed, and it is believed that these other references, whether they are considered individually or in combination, also do not disclose or suggest the above-described way in which the matching server uses the first and second databases.

In light of the above-discussed differences between Claims 1, 7 and 13 and the prior art, and because of the advantages associated with those differences, it cannot be said that any of these claims is obvious in view of the prior art. Accordingly, these Claims 1, 7 and 13 patentably distinguish over the prior art and are allowable. Claims 2-4 and 6 are dependent from Claim 1 and are allowable therewith; and Claims 8-10 and 12 are dependent from, and are allowable with, Claim 7. Likewise, claims 14-16 and 18 are dependent from, and are allowable with, Claim 13.

The changes requested herein to Claims 1, 7 and 13 only describe more expressly the manner in which the two databases, which are already described in the claims, are used to together to match volunteers with disabled people requesting help. It is thus believed that entry of this Amendment is appropriate, and such entry is respectfully requested.

For the reasons discussed above, the Examiner is asked to enter this Amendment, to reconsider and to withdraw the rejection of Claims 1-4, 6-10, 12-16 and 18 under 35 U.S.C. §103, and to allow these claims. If the Examiner believes that a telephone conference with

Applicants' Attorneys would be advantageous to the disposition of this case, the Examiner is asked to telephone the undersigned.

Respectfully Submitted,

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